



APPLICATION PROCEDURAL GUIDE

Design Review

A. GENERAL

1. Design Review

Design review involves a comprehensive evaluation of the site plan, architectural and landscape design components of development. Generally, all small-lot single family, multiple-family, commercial, industrial and institutional development requires design review.

2. Who Will Make the Determination

At the beginning of the process, you will be informed whether the Zoning Administrator (ZA) or the Design Review Committee (DRC) will review the project. The DRC is appointed by the City Council and consists of five city residents with an interest in and sensitivity to design. Depending on the type of project, the Zoning Administrator may be able to make the decision. In other cases, the project must be heard by the DRC. Upon first contact with the Planning Department, the Planner will notify you if your project is located within a redevelopment area. In cases where the project is within redevelopment project area boundaries, the DRC may review the project and can recommend approval, conditional approval or denial to the redevelopment agency of the city. The DRC does not review projects in redevelopment project areas with City appointed Project Area Committees.

Projects that qualify for Zoning Administrator design review include:

- Signs;
- Residential projects of four (4) units or less;
- Commercial, industrial, or institutional additions which constitutes less than a 50 percent increase in floor area or 20,000 sq. ft., whichever is less;
- New commercial, industrial, or institutional projects with a total floor area of 20,000 sq. ft. or less, when such projects are located within a planned community with its own design guidelines and design review process.

3. Design Standards

The principles and guidelines for design review are set forth in the City of Chula Vista Design Manual. Copies of the Manual are available from the planning division counter, on the city website at www.chulavistaca.gov, or by calling (619)-691-5101.

The Design Manual must be used in conjunction with city's development standards. These include building and fire codes, site and facility accessibility requirements for the disabled, zoning and planned community district regulations, grading and subdivision regulations, and a separate Landscape Manual, among others. There are also specific and precise plans, redevelopment plans, and project specific design guidelines that may supplement or supercede the otherwise applicable guidelines, standards and regulations. The planning division may be contacted regarding which if any of these other plans, standards and guidelines may apply to a particular property.

B. PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW

It is recommended that the applicant submit a request for Pre-Application Review prior to submission of the formal application. This preliminary review will help clarify the review process required, identify any potential project issues and major requirements. A request form can be acquired at the Planning and Building counter or on the city website (www.chulavistaca.gov).

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C. FILING APPLICATION

1. Application Form and Accompanying Exhibits

The applicant must complete a Development Processing Application Form. The completed forms are filed with the Planning Division and must be accompanied by the required fee, maps and attachments. (Refer to the Application Checklist as determined by Planning Staff)

2. Number of Copies

Generally, twenty-four (24) copies of plans and elevations are required. If the design review is for a project within a redevelopment area, an Eastern Territory SPA, or is filed in conjunction with another application, additional sets may be required. The Project Planner will notify you if additional sets are required for your project review.

One – 8 ½" X 11" reduction of site plans, floor plans and building elevations must be submitted for projects that are scheduled for public hearing. These should be submitted to the project planner approximately two (2) weeks before the public hearing.

3. Application Fee

Refer to fee schedule.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Certain projects will require environmental review involving the processing of an Initial Study or Environmental Impact Report, which will extend the processing time frames. Environmental review can be processed concurrently with design review, however, action on the design review application may not take place until the environmental process is complete. It should be possible for staff to determine whether or not environmental review will be required at the pre-application meeting. A separate environmental review application and procedural guide is available from the planning division.

E. PROJECT REVIEW PROCESS

1. Project Review

Approximately 3-4 weeks after the design review package has been filed, the applicant will be notified of staff comments on the plans. If deemed necessary, design review staff will arrange for a project review meeting with the applicant and representatives from other city departments to discuss the comments in detail.

Following this meeting, final plans and exhibits will be prepared by the applicant for action by the ZA or the DRC. The design review staff reviews the final plans and prepares a staff report and recommendation to the DRC, or a letter to the applicant in the case of ZA action. The project planner will discuss the contents of the draft staff report or letter with the applicant prior to it being finalized and issued.

2. Zoning Administrator Action

The Zoning Administrator (Z.A.) will approve, conditionally approve or deny the request in approximately 4 to 6 weeks after a complete application has been filed, if environmental review is not required.

3. DRC Meetings

DRC Meetings are held the second and fourth Monday of each month beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers in the Civic Center at 276 Fourth Avenue. The meetings are noticed and open to the general public.

A copy of the agenda and the staff report to the Committee will be mailed to the applicant at least three days prior to the meeting. The project architect/designer and the applicant or a designated representative

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should, in all cases, attend the meeting. It is likely the project will be continued to a subsequent meeting if there is no one representing the project in attendance.

F. PROJECT APPROVALS

Upon arriving at a decision (approval, conditional approval or denial) the Zoning Administrator shall issue a letter of determination. A copy of such letter will be sent to the applicant and any other interested party. The decision of the Zoning Administrator is final unless appealed within 10 days. Design review approvals expire after one year unless a written request for

G. APPEALS

The applicant, or any interested party, may appeal most decisions of the ZA or DRC within 10 days after the decision is rendered. Appeals from the ZA are directed to the DRC, and appeals from the DRC are directed to the Planning Commission. A decision of the Planning Commission may be further appealed to the City Council.

Appeals will be scheduled for the earliest available hearing date, which will normally be within 3-4 weeks from the date the appeal is filed. Contact planning staff regarding procedures for filing an appeal.

H. POSSIBLE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE IMPROVEMENTS

Applicants for development projects, including additions and interior/exterior remodels, and some proposals involving a change in land use, are advised that they may be required to install and /or modify on- and off-site public and private improvements and pay impact fees. Improvements may include on-site structures, paving and landscaping, and requirements to dedicate, improve and/or modify streets and other public facilities off-site. Fees may include sewer, traffic and development impact fees.

The necessity for or exact extent of these requirements and fees, if any, are generally not known until an application has been filed and routed for review and comment to the various City departments and outside agencies. Applicants are encouraged, however, to contact the City regarding the possibility for and the general extent of these requirements at the earliest possible stage of project consideration. Pre-application meetings are recommended and are free to the applicant. The City departments normally involved with such requirements are the Departments of Planning & Building and Fire for private improvements, and the Engineering Department for public improvements and impact fees.

As mentioned above, it is often helpful to request a Pre-Application Review with City staff to review issues and discuss possible requirements prior to formal application.

I. APPLICATIONS REQUIRING DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS

The fee you submit with the application is a deposit only. The amount of the deposit is an estimate based on an average processing time for the type of application. Your application may cost less or more depending on certain circumstances and complexity. If the cost of processing the application is less than the deposit amount, you will be reimbursed the balance. However, if the cost of processing is more than the deposit amount, you will be required to pay the difference. If at any time, the amount of the deposit is depleted to a minimal level inadequate to continue processing, or if a deficit situation exists, the Planning & Building Department will request that additional funds be deposited.

IMPORTANT: If the additional amount is not received by the specified date, it may cause the project to be delayed or postponed. In no case will a project be scheduled for consideration until the additional amount is received.